THE

Beauty, Vigour & Strength OF YOUTH Beſpoke for GOD:

IN A

SERMON

Lately Preached to

YOUNG MEN.

By *THOMAS POWELL* Miniſter of the Goſpel.

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TO THE

READER.

Christian Reader,

THE greatest and highest Honour of the Reasonable Creature is to serve Him who is the best Good and the last End, which is the design of this little Treatise. The Excellency and Necessity of what is here treated, justly merits a larger

Volumn. But I ſtudied Brevity, and that upon a two-fold account.

Firſt, Becauſe I was deſired that there might be little or no Variation from the Sermon as it was Preached, either in Altering or Enlarging, though ſomething of each I have done, yet ſo I hope, as to pleaſe both thee the Reader, and they who had the Opportunity of Hearing the ſame.

Secondly, Becauſe I was willing that more might have

have a ſhare in it, which poſsibly could not have been, if I had not endeavoured to crowd my Meditations in a little room. Birds when they come to a full heap of Corn, chirp and call for their fellowes. Goodneſs and Light are of a diffuſive Nature. And now ſince this is Midwifed into the World, (which was not intended by me) ſuch as it is I offer it to thee as the product of my ſincere and cordial Love to the Souls of young Men.

When a Book is of too great a bulk, the Poor cannot purchaſe it.

Let not the Plainneſs of the Matter, and the Homelineſs of the Style offend thee; I deſigned it not for a curious Pallate, being preached unto a plain Countrey-people, I aymed at their Edification, and not at any Popular Applauſe. The Treatiſe is uſefull for all that are enquiring after true Felicity, eſpecially the younger ſort of People, being ſuch for the moſt part that were preſent when this Sermon was Preached. What thou (Reader) apprehendeſt not

not Sound, carry it to the Touch-ſtone of the Word, and if but a Mite of ſaving Knowledge may be (through Gods Bleſsing) added to thy Underſtanding, let God have the Glory, and the Author hath his End, who is

READER,

Southwark, *Decemb.*

Thy Friend and Souls ſervant,

Thomas Powell.

ECCLES. XII. 1.

Remember Now thy Creatour in the Dayes of thy Youth, while the Evil Dayes come not, nor the Years draw nigh, when thou ſhalt ſay, I have no pleaſure in them.

GOD ſet up two great Lights in *Solomons* Heart, one ſhewing the Excellency of Chriſt, in the *Canticles*; the other, the Vanity of the Creature, as in *Eccleſiaſtes*, which is the ſecond Book of *Solomon*; and it is called *Eccleſiaſtes* becauſe *Solomon* was ſo called: And that either becauſe he ſpeaks unto a Multitude at once, or elſe becauſe of his Wiſdom, with which he was indeed (after a copious manner) endowed. The whole Book is a De-

Eccleſiaſtes, i.e. *a Preacher.*

declaration of *Solomons* repentance written in his old age, as may be gather'd both out of the title of it, and the cloſure of it in, the ſix laſt verſes, and alſo out of the whole body of it, being written upon a ſerious view of the paſſages and practices of his life paſt, and the great and manifold experience he made and found therein. He treats chiefly of the worlds vanity, true felicity, the maladies of old age, & the Advantage of being good betimes. Hence it is that young men in the concluſion of all are call'd upon to mind their Creator; and that whatſoever they are employed in beſides is vanity of vanities, and no wiſe yielding true ſatisfaction, but anxiety and torment unto their ſouls.

Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, while the evil dayes come not, nor the years draw nigh when thou ſhalt ſay, I have

have no pleaſure in them.

The words in general do preſs unto a duty of the greateſt moment in the world; wherein you may take notice of theſe ſeveral things.

1. The Act, Remember. 2. The Object, Creator. 3. The adjunct of Time; Now, in the dayes of thy youth, exegetically repeated, *while the evil dayes come not, nor the* years *draw* nigh, *when thou ſhalt* ſay I have no pleaſure in them.

The words will afford us many points of Doctrine. I ſhall only obſerve two, and ſo inſiſt upon them.

Doct. 1. *That above all things whatſoever, we ſhould not forget, but Remember our Creator.*

Doct.

The evil dayes spoken of in the text, and the years wherein we have no pleasure, is old age.

Doct. 2. *That there is great reason why we should remember our Creatour in the dayes of our youth, even while we are young, and before old age over-takes us.*

These in order; and with the first I begin, viz. *That above all things whatsoever, we should not forget, but Remember our Creator.*

The prosecution of this Point, I purpose, through Gods assistance in this wise:

1. I shall set my self to amplifie it. 2. To Apply it.

The amplification will consist of Explication and confirmation.

1. Explication, and so I shall shew you. 1. What this *Creator* is. 2. What it is to *remember* our Creator. 3. What it is to remember our Creator *above all things* whatsoever.

1. First, I am to shew you, *What this Creator is, whom we are call'd upon*

upon in the text to mind, Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth.

In the Hebrews it is (Thy Creatours) alluding to the Trinity, ſo that by Creatour we are to underſtand God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt; for though the Creation of the world is peculiarly aſcribed to God the Father, and look't upon as his proper work, in reſpect of order and relation, as he is the firſt perſon of the Trinity, yet not ſo as to exclude the reſt; for all the perſons of the Trinity (to ſpeak after the manner of men) had a hand in the Creation of the world, Gen. 1. 26. *And God ſaid, Let us make man in our Image, after our likeneſs:* who ſhould the Father ſpeak'

Quoad ordinem, Patris operandi modus eſt à ſe, per Filium, & Spiritum Sanctum. Hinc origo rerum, nempe Creatio, propriè tribuitur Patri, qui ordine originis eſt perſonarum prima. Deus) Hebr. *Elohim, id eſt, unus ex Elohim, ſcil. Pater, alloqui Filium & Spiritum Sanctum Synecd. integri. Non alloquitur Angelos.* Piſcat. in loc.

ſpeak unto here; *Let us*, but unto the Son and the Holy Ghoſt.

Secondly, What it is to Remember our Creator; It is not onely a bare thinking on him, and that now and then, but to remember our Creator implyes theſe ſeveral things.

Firſt, To know him; to know that he is, and what he is. That God is, and that he is to be worſhipped, is, νόμῳ γεγραπτῷ, a Law written in the heart of man, and that which the book of the Creatures teacheth as well as the book of the Scriptures. But now who This God is, and the right mode of worſhipping him, many are at a loſs; and the candle-light of Nature (without the help of the Holy Spirit in and by the Scriptures) cannot

Homo naturâ duplicem formatſyllogiſmum de Deo, theoricum et practicum. Theoricus eſt duplex 1. Deus eſt: ergo debeo eum cognoſcere. 2. Deus eſt bonus, ergo debeo cum colere. Practicus eſt, in quo conſcientia formatassumptionem: Deus mihi bonus eſt; Ergo mihi eſt colendus, Alſted. Syſt. Theolog.

cannot direct us, neither can our knowledge of God by them be a comprehenſive knowledge, what God is in his Eſſence, in his Attributes, in his perſons & in his works, no man or Angel hath, doth, or ever ſhall know; Though we muſt (if we would remember our Creator aright) know ſomething of each, yet he muſt have the wiſdom of God, and ſo be a God, that comprehendeth God in his Eſſence, Attributes, Perſons and works, what ſay you now Sirs, do you remember your Creator in this ſenſe? ſuch who do not experimentally know God, that he is; and in meaſure, What he is, cannot properly be ſaid to Remember him. Remember your Creator, that is no leſs than the Import of knowing and acknowledging your ſelves with God, whereby peace may come unto you, according unto that excellent counſel of *Eliphaz* to *Job*, *Acquaint now thy ſelf with*

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with God, thereby Good shall come unto thee, Job 22. 21.

Remember your Creator: That is of no less Import than the dying words of King *David* to his Son *Solomon*; *And thou Solomon my Son, know thou the God of thy Father*, 1 Chron. 28. 9.

Secondly, To Remember our Creator, implyes a reverent *Fear* of Him. *Remembring* of God is *fearing* of God. *Prov.* 23. 17. *Be thou in the Fear of the Lord all the day long.* How dareſt thou to ſay, that thou Remembreſt God, when thou *feareſt* him not, and haſt but little dread of his Greatneſs in thy Heart? Thou canſt fear Afflictions, Death, or any Evil approaching towards thee, and for the diverting whereof, applyeſt thy ſelf to the Means in order thereunto, but how little doeſt thou uſe thy Strength and Prudence

Where the Fear of God is, there Sin is conquer'd as to its reigning Power, and it ſhall no more ſtorm Walls, demoliſh Caſtles, break through Guards, beat up Quarters, and let in Enemies.

dence againſt Sin that curſed thing, and which rendreth thee obnoxious to the Wrath of God, which if thou feareſt not here, ſhalt hereafter to thy ſorrow and eternal detriment.

Thou canſt reverence a Perſon of Quality, or any Earthly Monarch, and when Acceſs unto him is granted thee, how great is thy Care and Diligence in demeaning thy ſelf before him? and how doſt thou tremble leſt by any uncomely Geſture or Action thou ſhouldſt offend him, knowing that in caſe of Default, thou mayſt not onely meet with Repulſe, but alſo Penalty? And ſhall the Preſence of Worms ſo awe thee, and not God, in whoſe preſence the bleſſed Saints and Angels cover their Faces, as being unworthy of Beholding him? It's no marvel why Conſcience bears ſo little ſway now adayes, why Piety is ſo little countenanc'd, why Gods Glo-

By the *Fear of God* Men do not only depart from that which is Evil, but are alſo inclin'd to do that which is Good. *Prov.* 16. 6. *Deut.* 5. 29.

ry is so little preferr'd, why one Man even becomes a Devil to another, and why Young men Remember not their Creator. The Reason of all lies here; The *Fear of God* is not before their Eyes, nor his Greatness studyed by them. Our Creator is God over all Blessed for evermore, the Lord of Hosts is his Name; all the Creatures are at his Beck and Check; he is the stronger side, and whosoever fears the Lord, need not fear any thing else. Confidence and strong Confidence is in the Fear of the Lord, yea a Fear-freeing Fear this Fear is.

So did not I (said good Nehemiah) because of the fear of God.

Prov. 14. 26.

Thirdly, To Remember our Creator implies setting the Mind on work on the Excellencies of him. *Psal.* 104. *v.* 34. *My Meditation of him shall be sweet.* The

Pulchra sunt omnia faciente te Domine, & ecce tu inenarrabiliter pulchrior qui fecisti omnia. Chrys. *All those things which thou hast made, are beautifull, but thou thy self art infinitely more beautifull.*

Ex-

Excellencies of God are many, great and incommunicable: Many and wonderfull are the Excellencies of the Creature, but not to be compar'd with God's; becauſe all Creature-Excellencies are but Derivatives. And what are the Streams, compar'd to the Fountain; the Rivers to the Ocean, and the excellencies of the Creature to the Excellencies of the Creator? being in him primitively and incommunicably, yea the proper ſubject and ſeat of all Excellencies whatſoever, God is. And canſt thou O vain young man ſet thy Heart on theſe tranſitory Excellencies of the Creature,

Some Eyes have been dazled too much with the glitterings of the Creatures, ſo as to take the Servant for the Maſter; and have been ſo much in admiring the Glaſs, as that they forgot the glorious Beauty that is repreſented. What Worſhip and Adoration hath the Sun had? even almoſt as much as the great Creator of Heaven and Earth himſelf. Strange! that they ſhould ſee ſo darkly, as not to diſcern the Face from the Veil that covers it. For the Sun is at beſt but umbra Dei, *and* nubecula citò tranſitura, *a mere ſpot, a cloud, if compar'd with ſo bright an Eſſence; and as He ſaith notably, the ſame Worſhippers muſt need; be* ἄθεοι χρ νυκτὸς, *Atheiſts in the Night-time.*

and yet canſt not look up ſo high as to the Creator, and take a View of his glorious and tranſcendent Excellencies that have and do raviſh the Hearts of all their Contemplators? *Davids* Meditations of his Creators Excellencies were ſweet unto him. Call back, O young Man, all thy ſtragling Affections; it is high time now, they have been long enough ſeeking Reſt in theſe terrene things, and finding none. Call home (O vain man) thy Love, thy Joy, Hope, Grief and Fear: Theſe are to the Soul, as the Souldiers to the Centurion; *If he ſaid to one, Go, he went; if to another, Come, he came*: Theſe (ſay ſome) are the Meſſengers of the Will; theſe (ſay others) are the Wheels, the Chariots, the Wings, the Feet of the Soul. But now if thy Love, which is the firſt, and General of all the Affections, ſhould be ſet, not on God, but the World; if your

your Hatred ſhould be directed, not againſt Sin, but Good men, or (which is worſe) againſt Goodneſs it ſelf; if your Zeal ſhould not be pure Flames for Divine Glory, but a burning Rage againſt the Truth of God; if your Fear ſhould not be a flight from Evil, but an Apoſtaſie from Chriſt; if your Anger ſhould be a Diſpleaſure at anothers Eminencies, and not at your own Exorbitances; if your Hope ſhould not be a well-ballanced Expectation of Happineſs, but a blind and venturous Preſumption of Mercy; and if your Grief ſhould be a trouble that you cannot be and doe more evil; Ah how vile, how irregular, how dangerous are Affections thus miſplac'd! When Love and Hatred keep to their right Centres, and move towards their proper Objects, to love nothing but Good, to hate nothing but Evil.

Fourthly, To Remember our Creator implies to recollect our ſelves, and return unto him as the Fountain of our Salvation, *Pſal.* 22. 27.

All the Ends of the World ſhall remember and turn unto the Lord.

By Sin we have Apoſtatiz'd from God; are we yet return'd unto him? is there a Converſion of the whole man unto God? Are Old things paſt away, and all things become New? Haſt thou a New Heart? till then thou canſt not remember God with any Affection. Haſt thou a New Will? till then thou canſt not do as thou oughteſt. Haſt thou a New Eye? till then thou canſt not ſee the difference that there is between things Spiritual and Temporal. Haſt thou a new Appetite? till then thou canſt not know what is bitter, or what is ſweet. Every Faculty is become the ſeat of Sin, and therefore a Neceſſity there is, of a univerſal

verſal Change. The Underſtanding is dark, and ſtands in need of Divine Illumination. The Will is contumacious, and needeth the Almighty Power of God to make it flexible. The Memory is weak, and needeth ſupernatural ſtrengthening. The Affections are dull, and need ſpiritual Operation. The Conſcience is benumm'd, and needeth the beams of God's Spirit to warm it, and quicken it, that it may no more miſlead, and be as a blind Guide. And thus our whole Life is crooked and perverſe; haſt thou gotten it made ſtrait by a ſincere Repentance and Reformation? The Holy Scriptures are a Rule, haſt thou meaſured thy Life by it? The Curſe of the Law hangs on thee, why doſt thou not ſatisfie its De-

Man is defiled *à capite ad calcem*, from Head to Foot; that (as the Philoſopher ſaith concerning the Soul, It is in every part; where there is Life, there is the Soul, for the Soul is the Life; ſo) whatever is in us, and cometh from us, and is acted by us, receiveth defilement from us. Sin is like a Leproſie, over the whole man; like a gangrene ſpreading over the whole Soul.

mands, and Appeal to the Grace of God in Christ for freedom therefrom? Thy miseries (O Natural man) are many, great, and intolerable, why dost thou not endeavour to extricate thy self out of them? Read this Scripture, O *Graceless Prodigal*: *Psal.* 9. 19. *The wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the Nations that forget God.*

Recollect therefore your selves, oh *Old Men*, before your dayes are quite concluded. *Remember your Creator Oh Young Men, while the evil dayes come not, nor the years draw nigh when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.* Is it not better to *live* than *die*, *turn* than *burn?* O Sirs, persist not till it be too late, but choose God your chiefest Good, onely Good, suitable Good, and everlasting Good.

Fifthly, To *Remember our Creator*, implies a *due Considering what may*

may Pleaſe or Diſpleaſe him.

Col. 1. 10. *That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleaſing.*

But how few are there that make this their work, ſtudying how to pleaſe God? Doth not the Courſe of their Lives rather tend to the contrary? Who lives to pleaſe God, but rather to diſpleaſe him? How little is Gods Favour now adayes eſteemed of? Moſt of us are ambitious of doing things that may pleaſe Perſons highly dignified in this World, but the pleaſing of God is look'd upon as a ſuperfluity, and that which may be as well omitted as perform'd; as if Gods good word would not honour us ſo much as a Mortals, and His Favour do us more good than the Favour of Man, whoſe breath is in his Noſtrils, and muſt ſuddenly periſh. Mans Favour is good in its place, but when compar'd with Gods, there is vaſt difference as to the Nature,

In thy favour is life, Psal. 30. 5.

Nature, Property, Effects and Perpetuity of it. Fooliſh therefore is he who preferres the pleaſing of Man before the pleaſing of God, and chooſeth rather the one than the other; that can remember what pleaſeth the Creature, but not what pleaſeth the Creator. This is preferring the leſs before the greater, and the Servant before the Maſter. How ſtands it therefore with us? Are Gods Smiles our Heaven, and his Frowns our Hell? Is there nothing that we take in hand, but we ſeriouſly penſitate and ponder it in our Minds, ſaying with our ſelves, Will this and that make for Gods Glory? if ſo, I'le do it; if not, I ſhall forbear. But, Oh Chriſtians, how many are remiſs in this kind of ſpiritual Exerciſe, excuſing themſelves with Phraſes that will not excuſe them at the Day of Judgement. This is too ſtrict, ſay ſome; what need is there of

of it, ſay others? and, Who can do ſo, is the language of many: But I wiſh I might have the Opportunity of telling part of my Mind to ſuch perſons. Is there not a Neceſſity of Remembring our Creator, if we would proſper? but can we remember him aright, if we pleaſe him not? and if we pleaſe him not, can we be ſaved?

Sixthly, To *Remember our Creator*, implies a remembring his *Mercies* and *retaining a thankfull ſenſe thereof.*

Pſal. 106. 21. *They forgat God their Saviour, which had done great things in Egypt.*

Doeſt thou often think on the Mercies of God, ſo frequently and bountifully conferred on thee? Doeſt thou often raviſh thy Soul in calling Mercies paſt to mind, living upon Mercies *preſent*, and *depending* upon Mercies to come? *Remember your Creator*, will ſurely bear

bear this Interpretation without any wrong to the words. Remember what your Creator has done for you, his Mercies bestowed on you in such and such a kind, at such and such a Time, in such and such a Place, among such and such Company. It is a sign that we sincerely esteem, and heartily remember a Friend, when we do not forget his Kindness, but do even write them down in our *Memorandum* Book: And so it stands good in this Case also; if we say, we remember God, and forget his Mercies, we lie, and the Truth is not in us; it being that which cannot stand together. Such who have received Mercies from the hands of God, yea such Mercies without which they could not have subsisted, and yet are unthankfull, forgetting both God and his Benefits too, surely such of all are most ungratefull. Mercies above us, and beneath us,

Hostis Gratiæ, inimica salutis. Bern.

Mer-

Mercies before us and behind us, Mercies on the right hand and on the left, renders us (if ſtill we are barren) the moſt ungratefull Monſters that ever lived on Earth. To be unthankfull, where there is the greateſt reaſon of being thankfull, is Folly in the Abſtract. And where Mercy is not a Load-ſtone to draw to God, it will be a Mill-ſtone to ſink into Hell. Vinegar you know 'tis בן יין *Filius Vini*; and the ſweeteſt Wine degenerates into the ſharpeſt vinegar. And as nothing is more cold than Lead, yet nothing more ſcalding than that when melted; ſo nothing is more ſweet than mercy, when thankfully received, yet nothing more terrible than that when abuſed; Grace abuſed turns to fury, and Mercies forgotten turn to ſore Wrath.

Seventhly and laſtly, To *Remember our Creator*, is to *ſerve* and *obey* him; and this indeed is the

the ſumme of all, *Deut.* 8. 11. *Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his Commandments and his Judgements, and his Statutes, which I command thee this day.*

Every wicked man carries (ſaith one) the Devils Pack.

Many, nay more ſerve the Devil and their own Luſts, than there do ſerve God. God made man for himſelf, but he hath leſs from him than any other Creature. Man ſhould ſerve God, and that in the firſt place; but inſtead thereof he ſerves himſelf firſt, the Devil and his Luſts firſt. Oh, wonderfull Degeneration, and the Curſedneſs of our lapſed Eſtate! One would think it incredible, that the Creature ſhould not ſerve the Creator; we may Wonder at it indeed, and yet Believe it we muſt, becauſe that it is, nothing is more certain; God who is Truth it ſelf hath ſaid ſo, and we by daily Experience find it ſo: here then is a *Myſtery of Iniquity*, That Man ſhould

ſhould Renounce God who made him, and Side with the Devil who hates him, and will Eternally deſtroy him, if ſtill ſided with: That Man ſhould take more Delight in Self-deſtruction, than in Self-felicitating: That Man ſhould ſell himſelf to ſin, and take more delight therein than in Obeying one reaſonable Commandement: Why ſhould all this be, O vain man? Are the wayes of God unequal, his Demands impoſſible, his Commands intollerable? Have a care of harbouring hard thoughts of God, who hath ſaid that his *Yoak is eaſie, and his burden is light*, Matth. 11. 29.

If thou haſt but a mind to be engaged in the Service of God, let not the Difficulties that attend it diſcourage thee; but know, that God can by the ſweet Diſcoveries of himſelf (whileſt thou art in his Service) chear thy Heart, and make that which ſeemed hard

God's Spirit is an aſſiſting and ſupporting Spirit.

and

and difficult, the very Delight of thy Soul. *Jacobs* meeting with, and enjoying of *Rachel*, rendered his hard and long Service easie and delightfull unto him: And so a feeling of Gods Spirit moving on thy Heart, when thou art engaged in any Religious Exercise, will make it joyous and not grievous, a Delight and not a Burden, a Heaven, and not an Hell.

Besides, holy Obedience is only hard and difficult to the Ignoble part of a Saint, *viz.* the Flesh, not to the Noble part of a Saint, *viz.* the Soul. All the Wayes of God (though tending to the pulling out of right Eyes, and cutting off of right Hands) are wayes of Pleasantness to the Noble part of a Saint. So far as every Christian is Renewed, he is best when he can serve God most, according unto the Apostle; *I delight in the Law of God after the inward Man: with my Mind I serve the Law of God,*

God, though with my Fleſh the Law of Sin.

Remember thy Creator; that is, Remember him ſo as to *love, ſerve,* and *obey* him. And thus you have heard firſt and laſt the full Import of theſe words; *Remember thy Creator.*

The third thing I am to ſpeak unto by way of Explication, is this. What is it to *remember our Creator* above all things whatſoever, which may fall under theſe three heads.

1. *Loving* God above all things whatſoever.

2. *Fearing* God above all things whatſoever.

3. *Obeying* God above all things whatſoever.

Firſt, *Loving* God above all things whatſoever. Here is Love in its higheſt ſtature, and ſuch a kind of Love God requires; nay, no other Love will he acccept of;

either of that kind we must give him, or none at all. The prime of our Affections must God have; and indeed who deserves them more than He? who shall have them, if not He? Verily, our selves have not so great a right unto our selves, as He? We and our selves, and all that is ours are Gods; yea we are more Gods than our own. How is it then, that God is no more lov'd than he is, and that even some who profess Love unto him, do not love him above all things whatsoever? Surely here lies the Reason, Ignorance, Ignorance, Ignorance; *Ignoti nulla cupido*, sayes the old Poet; what we *know* not, we *love* not. Did persons but *know* God more, they would *love* him more. O who would not but love that infinite Love and Ex-

Love is due to God, not onely for the Good he hath done us, and for the Good that we hope for from him, but for the Good that is in him. Yea God is to be loved for himself. Du Moulin, *Treatise of* Peace and Contentment of Mind.

Excellency, though he had no Intereſt of his own in it! God is Love it ſelf, and if we will not love Love it ſelf, ſurely we are diſtracted.

Doeſt thou therefore, O my Soul, Remember thy Creator? and doeſt thou ſo Remember him as to Love him? and doeſt thou ſo love him, as to love him above all things whatſoever? How many, I fear, if weighed in the Ballance would be found wanting as to this, which is the ſumme and ſubſtance of Chriſtianity! And ſhall I here expoſtulate with the Young man? What ſayeſt thou? Art thou willing to give Chriſt the Firſt-born of every Affection in thy Soul? Doeſt thou love God above all things whatſoever? Doeſt thou love him above thy Relations, Eſtate, and very Life? Canſt thou preferre Gods Glory before all Secular Intereſt whatſoever, and even deny thy

Tota Lex Chriſti tribus literulis includitur: Ama. Deum ama, & omnes leges ſervaſti. Drexelius.

very Life for him, if called thereunto? This indeed is Love like Gold tried in the Fire. Verily, when Carnal Relations come in competition with, and ſtand in oppoſition unto Chriſt, we muſt hate them; when our Friends would prove Snares, and hinder us from doing our Duty, we muſt either *leap over* them, or *tread upon* them; like *Galeacius Caracciolus*, that moſt famous Patron and Second *Moſes*; who though he was the Son of a Marqueſs, the Pope's Nephew, yet deſerted *Italy*, and (with *Moſes*) *Pharaoh*'s Court, treading upon and leaping over his Wife and Children, rather than he would worſhip Idols, and ſo that he might be with Reverend *Calvin*, under his Miniſtry in *Geneva*. So that in this caſe, *Odium in ſuos*, is *Pietas in Deum*. *Jerome* likewiſe hath an excellent paſſage: *If my Wife* (ſaith he) *ſhould hang about my Neck*,

Chriſtus inter Amicos maximus.

Neck, my Mother ſhew me the Breaſts that gave me ſuck, perſwading me to deny Chriſt, I would not. *Præcepta docent, exempla movent.*

Peter though a *Friend* and *Diſciple* of Chriſt, yet *when* he *prov'd a Tempter*, Chriſt ſaith unto him, *Get thee behind me, Satan.* I cannot omit that excellent Paſſage of Mr. *Swinnock*, that Laborious and Pious Divine, concerning *Love to God*, being as followeth: *I wiſh (ſince Love is the greateſt thing my Saviour can give, for God is Love, and the greateſt which I can give my Saviour,) that his love to me may be reflected back again; that my chiefeſt Love may be as a Fountain ſeal'd up to all others, and broached onely for him who is altogether lovely, that I may hate Father, Mother, Wife, Child, Houſe and Land, out of Love to him; that many Waters of Affliction may not quench this Love, but rather like ſnuffers make this Lamp to burn the brighter.* Treatiſe of *making Religion ones Buſineſs*, pag. 333.

Again, Doeſt thou love *Chriſt* (O Young man) above thy *Eſtate* or this preſent World? Haſt thou put thy Love to Chriſt in one Ballance, and thy Love to the World in another; and doth thy Love to Chriſt weigh down thy Love to the World? or is not thy Caſe like the young Man in the Goſpel, who was Chriſts Hearer, but not his Follower: When Chriſt ſaid unto him, *Sell all and give to the Poor*; it is ſaid, *Abiit triſtis*, he went away *ſorrowfull*, *Mat.* 19.22. Doth the World lye nearer thy heart than Chriſt? How then doſt thou love Chriſt above all things whatſoever?

Mr. *Francis Xavarias* counſel'd *John* the Third, King of *Portugal*, to meditate every day, a quarter of an hour upon this Text: *What ſhall it profit a man to gain the whole World, and loſe his own Soul*, Mark 8. 36?

Again, Is Chriſt (O young Man) of more eſteem unto thee than

The Apoſtle Paul *carryed the Image of Chriſt in his heart as a Saint, the Meſſage of Chriſt in his mouth as a Miniſter, and the Mark of Chriſt in his body as a Martyr.*

thy

thy Life? canſt thou lay it down for his ſake? His Love to thee was ſtronger than Death, is thy Love to him ſtronger than Life? Can wicked Men be content to ſuffer for their Luſts, and will not ye ſuffer for Chriſt?

Heroick *Luther* hath an Expreſſion, and indeed it is like himſelf: *I would rather* (ſaith he) *be a Martyr than a Monarch.* And the ſame ſaid again, *Diſce mori ut vivat Chriſti Gloria:* Learn to *die* that the Glory of Chriſt may *live.*

Such who do preferre Chriſt, think not much to die for him; and that it is ſo, ſee it confirm'd in this Cloud of Witneſſes. The Prophet *Iſaiah* was kill'd with a Saw, *Jeremiah* with Stones, *Amos* with an Iron-barre, and St. *Luke* was hanged on an Olive-tree: So that this is clear, he who preferres his Life before Chriſt, is not worthy of him. He that with *Judas*

The way to Paradiſe is by a flaming Sword, the way to Canaan is through a howling Wilderneſs, and the way to Heaven is by the Gates of Hell.

and *Spira* will rather ſin than ſuffer, muſt with them ſuffer a Hell on this ſide of Hell.

Secondly, *Fearing* God above all things whatſoever. Thou fearest thy Father and Mother, thy Maſter, and ſuch who have the Rule over thee; but doeſt thou *fear* thy Maker? How many, I fear, (eſpecially Young men) may I find tardy in this? Why now to *remember* thy Creator above all things whatſoever, is to *fear* him; and to fear him above all things whatſoever, is to fear him in an otherguiſe manner than one Mortal fears another. Civil or Natural Difference among us here below, commandeth proportionable Reverence, and if ſuch Reverence be due from one Creature to another, when they are all made of the ſame coarſe earthly Mould, and muſt all be buried in the bowels of their common Mother, the Earth; when there

is

is no Eſſential, but onely an Extrinſecal difference between them: What Fear and Reverence then is due from us poor duſt and aſhes to the God of the Spirits of all Fleſh, the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords, between whom and his Creatures there is an infinite diſtance! O be perſwaded (above all things) *to fear* that glorious and fearfull Name, *The Lord thy God.* That Name which is the greateſt prop of thine Affiance, commandeth thy Fear and Reverence, when thou heareſt:

In the fear of God give Audience to his Word; Acts 13. 16. Poor Peaſants ſhould tremble when this Prince is ſpeaking. It becomes the greateſt Perſon to be awfull in Gods Preſence, more than in the preſence of any other. *Abraham*, who had the honour and favour

Conſtantine *the Great, when hearing a Sermon, would ever and anon ſtart out of his Chair of State, and ſtand up for a while, being affected, and (it may be) terrified with the Word, inſomuch that his Courtiers were amazed, becauſe ſuch a poſture did not become ſo high a place.* Euſeb. de vit. Conſtant. l. 3. c. 17.

to

to be Gods Friend, yet when God ſpake to him, fell on his face, *Gen.* 17. 3. *Moſes*, though high in the Heart of God, yet is humble when he hears from God; *He bowed his Head towards the Earth and worſhips*, Exod. 34. 8.

And ſo when thou *prayeſt*, put up thy Petitions to God with a great deal of Trepidation, knowing that though thou takeſt upon thee to ſpeak unto the great God of Heaven and Earth, yet ſtill thou art but Duſt and Aſhes. *Luther* prayed with Confidence as to a Father, but with Reverence as to a God. Thou art at beſt but a Begger, and a *proud heart* will not ſuit a *Beggers purſe*. The *Eaſtern* Chriſtians when they called on God, threw themſelves on the ground.

Tantâ reverentiâ ut ſi Deo, & tantâ fiduciâ ut ſi amico.

The Lord will give Grace and Glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly, Pſal. 84. 11.

God

God reſiſteth the proud, but giveth Grace to the humble. ἀντιτάσσεται.

God ſets himſelf in *battel-array* againſt a *proud man*, as the *Greek* word emphatically ſignifies.

To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite ſpirit, and trembleth at my Word, Iſa. 66. 2. *Deus propitius eſt illis qui dolent quòd ipſum peccatis ſuis offenderunt, ac proinde trepidant, quum cogitant ſe damnationem æternam eſſe meritos.* Piſcat. in loc.

Again, when thou approacheſt to the *Lords Supper*, is another ſpecial time when God ſhould be more than ordinarily reverenced and feared. This is *Myſterium tremendum*, a Myſtery to be trembled at. Read that excellent Scripture. *Let us have Grace whereby we may ſerve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear, for our God is a conſuming fire*, Heb. 12. 28, 29. Διὸ βασιλείαν ἀσάλευτον παραλαμβάνοντες ἔχωμεν χάριν δι' ἧς λατρεύωμεν εὐαρέστως τῷ Θεῷ μετ' αἰδοῦς καὶ εὐλαβείας, v. 28. Καὶ γὰρ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν πῦρ καταναλίσκον, v. 29.

This

This holy Fear and Trembling it is that graceth all our performances, and makes them acceptable unto God.

Thirdly, *Obeying* God above all things whatsoever. All Service must be denyed, rather than Gods must be neglected: Not that I would hereby encourage Servants unto Neglect in their Masters Employ, that is not my drift; that which I would have Servants and all do, is *serving* and *obeying* God in a right manner. And now God is *obey'd* and *serv'd* in a right manner, and above all things whatsoever,

חנה ינב לבדכי, *Esau* mourned, *Judas* confessed, *Ahab* humbled himself in dust, and *Cain* sacrificed, but none of these were accepted with God, because the root of the matter was not in them.

First, When he is serv'd *sincerely and without the mixtures of hypocrisie. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump*, 1 Cor. 5. 6.

My Son give me thy Heart, Prov. 23. 26.

'Tis

'Tis the Heart that God looks at, the Heart that God requires, and the Heart it is that makes the Service acceptable, and ſhews the *ſincerity* of him that performs it. *My Son give me thy heart*; not lend me thy Ear, or afford me thy Tongue. A Sacrifice unto God *without the Heart, is an abomination unto him. I hate your Burnt-Offerings, my Soul nauſeates your ſolemn Aſſemblies. Odi Dianos, & dona ferentes.* Bring me no more vain Oblations; ἐχθρῶν δῶρα ἄδωρα, καὶ οὐκ ὀνήσιμα. Hypocriſie ſpoyls every Prayer, ſoyls every Ordinance, ſtains and diſcolours every Duty, invenoms every Mercy. If ſuch an one Pray, 'tis eſteemed Howling; if he Mourn, 'tis hanging down the head like a Bulruſh; if he Sacrifice, 'tis cutting off a Dogs Neck; if he Rejoyce, 'tis but a Blaze, a crackling of Thorns under the Pot.

Danaos

Hypocrita cupit ſe videri juſtum.

Secondly, When he is ſerv'd, not with

with a *ſervile*, but with a *filial Fear*; when he is ſerv'd, not with *conſtraint*, but *willingly* and *chearfully*. God loves a willing Servant. Religion ſhould be full of Alacrity. Heavenly Duties and ſpiritual Performances are to flow freely from the Soul, like thoſe voluntary drops that come ſweating from the Honey-comb of its own accord, without any preſſing or cruſhing. It is onely the Dregs of Obedience that will not come forth without ſqueezing and wringing. The better any thing is, the more freely doth it diffuſe it ſelf. If therefore you would ſerve God as you ſhould do, ſerve him with a chearfull Fear; becauſe Chearfulneſs puts a gloſs and luſtre upon Religion, and makes it amiable even in the eyes of the world. *Third-*

Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power, Pſal. 110. 3. Hebr. *Willingneſſes*, the Abſtract, and in the Plural Number. See *Pſal.* 68. 10. *As if the Holy Ghoſt could not ſpeak enough how* willing *they are, to note exceeding great willingneſs to ſubmit to every Commandment of the Lord*; or *it may ſignifie Free-will Offerings, voluntary Oblations.* Jun. & alii.

Thirdly, When he is ſerved *univerſally*, in all reſpects, *in Holineſs towards God, in Righteouſneſs towards man.*

Then ſhall I not be aſhamed, when I have reſpect unto all *thy Commandments*, Pſal. 119. 6.

How many are there that pick and cull their Duties, and ſo indeed ſerve not the will of God, but their own Choyce? That anſwer the Lord with half-Obedience, like the Eccho, which makes not a perfect Reſpondence of the Voice, but of ſome part thereof? Many make ſuch a difference amongſt the Tables, as if onely one ſide, or one part were of Gods writing; The Man that (like *Agrippa*) doth but *almoſt* Believe, *almoſt* Repent, *almoſt* Obey, that man ſhall be *ſav'd* proportionably, *almoſt*.

Our Obedience muſt be *compleat.*

Fourthly, When he is ſerv'd *conſtantly*; not now and then admitting Ceſſations, but all the dayes

We must not only *begin* well but *end* well.

dayes of our Life, *constantly* in all Estates, unto the End, *Col.* 1. 10. I have done with *Explication*, and so have shewed you the Import of *Remembring your Creator*, as it lies before you in the Text and Doctrine. The Second part of the Amplification will be *Confirmation*, which shall consist of several Scripture-Reasons.

Finit coronat Opus.

Rea. 1. First, Above all things whatsoever, we must not forget, but *Remember our Creator*, because He hath *commanded* us: *Remember thy Creator.* Doth it become a Child when commanded, to dispute his Fathers Command? Is it not his *Father* that commands him, and therefore he must do it? Why, is not God the Father of us all by Creation, and are we not obliged to Obey him? The Wind and Seas do obey him, and shall We turn Rebels? All Creatures pay Homage unto him, and shall Man refuse? *Doth the Oxe know*

know his Owner, and the Aſs his Maſters Crib; Iſa. 1. 3. And ſhall not we whom God hath endowed with Reaſon, and made *capaces Religionis*, capable of Religion? Are all the Creatures at Gods beck, and ready to obey him whenſoever he deſireth it, and yet ſhall we ſpurn againſt him, provoking him to wrath, and grieving his holy Spirit? Why cannot we find in our hearts to obey our Father, Creator and Lord? Is he not our Sovereign, and have any gone on in a courſe of Rebellion againſt him, that did ever proſper? Is it not a vain thing to ſtand it out with God, or contend with the Almighty? Would it not be more advantagious to lay down the Weapons, and crie *peccavi*, than to wreſtle and be foyl'd, fight and be kill'd? Is it not better to remember our Friend, that he may remember us, when the proudeſt and moſt ambitious

ſhall e're long ſee their need of him.

Rea. 2. Religion that was firſt in Gods intention, is now become laſt in mans execution.

Secondly, We muſt not forget, but above all things *Remember our Creator*, becauſe it is *the End of our Creation.* Man was made to love, ſerve and obey his Maker, and God hath made him capable, though now by Sin degenerated.

Rea. 3. God can eaſily look us into the Grave, & frown us into Hell.

Thirdly, God who *made* us, can *deſtroy* us; our Creator is our Preſerver; as we had our Being from God, ſo on him doth our Being depend. The ſame Power that made the World, upholds the World; the ſame God that made us out of nothing, can make us into nothing: It concerns us therefore that all of us do ſee to this main thing, *Remember thy Creator.* Are we not in Gods hands, as the Clay is in the hands of the Potter; we are his Creatures, and he may do with us what he pleaſeth, and who ſhall gain-

ſay

ſay or oppoſe him in the leaſt? Let us now therefore deferre no longer, but remember and call to mind our Holy Creator, leſt he becomes ſo angry as not to be pacified, but to deſtroy us for evermore.

Fourthly, God is a *bountifull Benefactor*, he feeds us, cloaths us, and gives us Houſe-room, and therefore not to remember him, is double Ingratitude. God ſhewed Mercy unto thee before thou couldſt underſtand it; he prevented thee with Bleſſings, before thou couldſt deſire them. When thou waſt in the Womb, his Bounty embrac'd thee; when thou hangedſt on thy Mothers Breaſt, he did care for thee. How many years are paſt, in which thou waſt not? yet God erected this Houſe of thy Body for thee; gave thee a Reaſonable Soul, made thee a Man and not a Stone or a Serpent; And yet wilt thou

He is a beaſt in the ſhape of a Man, that will not ſerve that God at whoſe Mercy he lies every moment.

not love this God, take delight in this God, fear this God, ſerve and obey this God? Is it not in and by him that thou liveſt, moveſt and haſt thy being? Is not the Aire which thou breatheſt in, his? Is not the Night and Day his, whoſe Intercourſes ſerve for thy Labour and Reſt? Is not the Earth his, whoſe Fruits do nouriſh thee moſt plentifully? Yea doth not this Benefactor wonderfully form, furniſh and conſerve all the Creatures for thy ſake, ſome whereof ſerve to *obey* thee, ſome to *nouriſh* thee, ſome to *cloath* thee, ſome to *cure* thee, ſome to *chaſtiſe* thee; but all of them to *teach* and *inform* thee? What ſayeſt thou now, wilt thou reſolve to think now and then on this precious Creator of ours? Muzzle not, I beſeech you, the mouth of Conſcience, but give it leave to ſpeak its mind freely.

Fifthly, We ſhould not *forget*, but

but above all things *remember* our Creator, becauſe he is our *Redeemer* alſo. We do not onely owe unto God our Creation, Suſtentation, but *Redemption* likewiſe. So that thou mayſt ſay, *I was in the jaws of Hell, but thou O God didſt pluck me out by the Blood of thy Son; I was the ſlave of Satan, but thy Grace hath deliver'd me out of his power: I owe unto thee more than I can perform for my Creation, how then ſhall I do to repay thee for my Redemption? The loſt Sheep thou haſt deliver'd out of the Claws of the infernal Wolf. The fugitive Slave thou haſt brought out of the Priſon of Hell. The loſt Groat thou haſt ſought out with great carefulneſs. In* Adam *I fell, and thou haſt erected me. In* Adam *I was captivated, but thou haſt ſet me at liberty. In* Adam *I was loſt, and again thou haſt ſaved me.*

The work of Redemption is many wayes to be admired more than Creation.

Sixthly and laſtly, we muſt not forget, but above all things whatſoever

God is *Centrum quietativum* (as the Schools ſpeak) the proper, quieting reſting Centre of the Soul, and in himalone can it truely reſt.

whatſoever Remember our Creator, becauſe our *chiefeſt Happineſs* and *Felicity* conſiſts therein. God is the *ſummum bonum*, and if we would be happy, it muſt be by reſting in him, ſetling and ſtaying the heart on him; not the Creature but the Creator is the Souls Centre: The Soul is immortal, and nothing can ſatisfie it but God who is immortal.

Thy Soul nothing can ſatiate
But God who did thy Soul create.

The Needle of the Compaſs trembles till it turns to the North Pole. There is in Man a Natural Pulſe that beats after Happineſs. *Noahs* Dove could find no reſt for the ſole of her foot, till ſhe came to the Ark. *Return unto thy Reſt, O my Soul*, Pſal. 116.7. There is an impoſſibility of finding true Reſt, Solace, and Satisfaction of

In hoc peccabam quod non in Deo, ſed in creaturis ejus, me atque cæteras voluptates quærebam, atque ita irruebam in dolores, confuſiones & errores animæ. Aug.

Soul

Soul any where but in God, and with God alone. You may as ſoon find Life in Death, or Light in Darkneſs, as Reſt for your Souls any where but in God alone. On the tranſitory things of this world the Soul often ſeeks for Reſt, but finds it not, why? Becauſe the Soul is more worthy than all the Creatures. God is the End whereunto the Soul was created: For it was made after the Image of God; therefore it cannot be quiet and at reſt but in its End, that is, in God. As the Soul is the Life of the Body, ſo is God the Life of the Soul. And where wilt thou go, Sinner? thou canſt not find Reſt here below in any thing at all. Can Sin give reſt, that is the greateſt Evil in the world? Can that give reſt, that is the Cauſe of all the Confuſions and Deſolations that are in the world? Can that give Reſt, that was the firſt and onely Cauſe and Founder of Hell?

Tu bonum nullo indigens bono, ſemper quietus es, quoniam tua quies tuipſe es. Idem.

Hell? Can that give reſt, that makes us like the Devil, that reſtleſs Spirit? will you have recourſe to the good things of this world, to Creature-comforts and Enjoyments; to Friends, Relations, Eſtate, and the like? *The Creatures* (ſayes a worthy Divine) *are not good; at leaſt they are not the Souls good; nothing* (ſays he) *but an infinite Godhead can allay your hunger after Happineſs.* And ſo another; *The underſtanding, Will and Affections are ſuch a Triangle, as that nothing but the Trinity can fill them. Dura ſunt omnia, & tu ſolus requies: All things* (ſayes *Auſtin*) *are full of trouble and difficulty; Thou alone, O God, art the true Reſt.* All things on this ſide God have their Mixtures, they have a *dark* as well as a *bright* ſide: Is not our Wine mixt with Water, our Honey with Gall, our

Bonus eſt qui fecit me, & ipſe eſt bonum meum, & illi exulto omnibus bonis meis.

He is Good that made me (ſaith *Aug*) and he is My Good, and in him do I exult and rejoyce.

our Sugar with Wormwood, and our Roſes with Prickles? But now God is every way a pure and immixed Good; He is all Light, Love, Sweetneſs and Holineſs. *Deus meus, Vita mea, Dulcedo mea*, &c. *O my God, my Life, my Sweetneſs!* ſaith *Auguſtine*. Why then ſhould we ſeeke Happineſs in thoſe things that cannot give us Health, or Strength, or Eaſe, or a good Nights Reſt, or an Hours Sleep, or a good Stomach.

The Application of the firſt Doctrine.

It will be of great Uſe unto us by way of *Reprehenſion*, *Exhortation* and *Commendation*.

First, By way of *Reprehenſion*; if this be ſo, then ſuch are to be Reproved that neither *remember God* or his *Mercies*, whoſe Minds are fill'd with Vanity, and ſwell therewith, but God and his Mercies *Uſe* 1.

cies are out of their Thoughts.

Vſe 2. Secondly, By way of *Exhortation*; we who have given God but little of our Time, Strength and ſuperior Powers, let us now begin; For ſhame let us not live longer in the world without God and Chriſt; how comfortleſs and dangerous is it? Some of us have liv'd a great while, and yet have not made choyce of our chiefeſt Good, but are as far from it as when we came firſt into the world.

Vſe 3. Thirdly, You who have call'd upon God betimes, and do ſerve, love and obey him, are to be *commended*; and whatſoever Reputation or Fame ye may get among men, yet know this is your higheſt Dignity, that you Know God, Obey God, Love God, and Walk with God. *This Man fears God*, is an *Encomium* indeed.

The

The second Doctrine is this:

There is great Reaſon why we ſhould Remember our Creator in the dayes of our Youth, even while we are young, and before Old Age overtakes us. Doct. 2.

And this I ſhall endeavour to make obvious in theſe ſeveral particulars.

Firſt, Becauſe your Creator *requires* it. Young men, God calls upon you, ſaying, *Remember your Creator in the dayes of your Youth.* Young men, Miniſters call upon you, ſaying, *Remember your Creator in the dayes of your Youth.* Young men, Good Company calls upon you, ſaying, *Remember your Creator in the dayes of your Youth.* Angels deſire it, the Spirit ſtrives; Chriſts Invitation is, *Come*; the Goſpel cries, *Now*; and what, will you rather liſten unto Satan? will nothing prevail with you? Shall God *Rea.* 1.

God call for your Youth, and will you deny it? How can ye think then to proſper? As therefore you would tender your own ſafety, anſwer like the Eccho; Lord doeſt thou call for my Youth? O take it then, and thank thee too; for what is there in me that ſhould attract God, and make him accept of me? My Youth, is it not full of Levity, Wantonneſs and Vanity? Am I not all over corrupt, from the Crown of the Head unto the ſole of the Foot, full of wounds, bruiſes and putrifying Sores? Am I not (eſpecially conſidering me in my Youth) as an untamed Beaſt? all my Actions being raſh and rude, and no Good in me can be found at all; my Affections being ſtrong, are impatient of Reproof and Correction, they will not

Juventutis aſſecla eſt ſtultitia; as a Page follows his Maſter, ſo Folly follows Youth. *Nazian. orat. 46. in Eccleſiaſt.*

Vicina laſſibus eſt Adoleſcentia: Youth is the Age whereunto men are neereſt, and moſt ready to fall; witneſs the Prodigal.

not ſubmit their ſhoulders to the Yoke of God, but like wild ſhee-Aſſes they ſnuffe up the wind, and deſpiſe the Hunter. Satan hath Temptations ſuited to every Age: And the Age whereupon he works moſt buſily, and prevails moſt mightily, is Youth. The Devil he is for the prime of our Dayes, and God he is for the prime of our Dayes, and who hath the moſt right, God or the Devil? ſurely God, thy Conſcience will ſay: But yet how many (notwithſtanding this) are there that give their young and luſty years unto the Prince of the Aire, the God of this World, who allures them ſo to doe, by telling them that their old, withered and decrepit Age is good enough to ſerve God. But Iniquity many times is repaired with a proportionable Plague, that becauſe they will not give their young Years unto the Lord, he will not accept

the

the ſervice of their Old Age, but cuts them away, (yea, which is moſt fearfull, in their ſins) and lets them never come to the Honour of a hoary head. Will ye now Young Men, hearken unto this, and flee Youthfull Luſts; God requires the Cream of your dayes. In the Law he required unto himſelf the Firſt-fruits, *Lev.* 2.14. *Wheat beaten out of the green Ears*; to ſignifie that he will be ſerv'd with the Firſt-fruits of our green and flouriſhing Age.

Rea. 2. Secondly, Remember your *Creator* in the dayes of your Youth, becauſe *too ſoon* you cannot Remember him. *Nunquam ſera eſt ad bonos mores via:* The way to be Good is never too late. I am ſure the way to be Good, is never too ſoon; and though Divines do ſay, a True Repentance is never too late, yet a late Repentance is ſeldom true. True Repentance (without doubt) cannot be too late;

late; but then, late Repentance is very ſuſpicious, being ſeldom true: Could we have ſerved God in our Mothers Womb, yet we could not ſerve him too ſoon. And thoſe who ſhall ſerve him to Eternity, cannot ſerve him too much. *Hark, young men, hark, but let it not amaze you; We can never ſerve God too ſoon, becauſe he lov'd us from Eternity; and we cannot ſerve him too much becauſe he loves us to Eternity.* Never fear thy ſetting out too ſoon, for the ſooner the welcomer, and too ſoon thou canſt not be. The conſideration of this methinks ſhould perplex the Aged that have loſt their time, and ſpur on ſuch who are in their full vigour and ſtrength, and *tempus commodum*, they have for God. Know, you who are here preſent, and yet ſhall not put in practice what has been told you, will have nothing to ſay for your ſelves. You cannot

not ſerve God too ſoon, why then do you not begin, run, and keep on in that way?

Rem. 3. Thirdly, Remember your *Creator* in the dayes of your Youth, becauſe *it is a Time that is moſt Acceptable. Now is the acceptable time, Now is the day of Salvation.* 2 Cor. 6. 4. Upon this Monoſyllable *Now*, (ſaith one) depends Eternity. As there is a *preſent Time*, ſo there is a *preſent Truth* to lay hold on. The time of our Youth is the onely time to lay hold on Eternal Life, and to make a ſurrender of our ſelves unto God and Jeſus Chriſt. When we take a far Journey, it is requiſite that we have the Morning before us. Sirs, to goe from Earth to Heaven is a great Journey, let us then be carefull to ſet out in the Spring and Morning of our Age; deferre not till thou beeſt Old, but walk while thou haſt Light, leſt the Darkneſs and Night of

The great weight of *Eternity* hangs upon the ſmall wire of *Time.*

of Old Age and Death overtake thee, when no man can work. If therefore, young Men, you would ever be ſerviceable to God, let it be while your ſtrength laſts, and before it quite fails. Give not the Devil the Prime, Bud, Bloſſome, Flower of your Age, and the Cream of your dayes, and in your Old Age (when you can do nothing) offer your ſelves to God; as if he were bound to have you then, and onely then when the Devil has done with you: And O unreaſonable Creature, that haſt nothing for thy Maker but the Devils Leavings, *viz.* Old Age, a Receptacle of all manner of Maladies! Behold, the wrinckled Face, rotten Teeth, ſtinking Breath, withered with Drieneſs, dim'd with Blindneſs, abſurded with Deafneſs, overwhelm'd with Sickneſs, and bowed together with Weakneſs, having no uſe of any ſenſe but the ſenſe of Pain.

Dumvires annique ſinunt, tolerate laborem, Jam veniet tacito curva ſenecta pede. Ovid.

Therefore (ſaid the Wiſe-man) *Remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy Youth, while the evil dayes come not, nor the years draw nigh when thou ſhalt ſay, I have no pleaſure in them*; And ſo the Wiſe-man goes on, Allegorically deſcribing Old Age; ſhewing the Miſeries that do attend the ſame; a little whereof you may take notice of, for the quickening you unto an Improvement of your Time while ye are young. *While the Sun, or the Light, or the Moon, or the Stars be not darkened, nor the Clouds return after the Rain:* Shewing hereby, that in Old Age all the Abilities of the Mind ſhall be decayed: *The Clouds return after the rain*;] As in Winter, one Evil following another. *In the day when the Keepers of the Houſe ſhall tremble*;] The Hands and Arms prove crazy. *And the ſtrong men ſhall bow themſelves*;] The Thighs and Leggs ſhall bend under

der us. *And the Grinders ceaſe, becauſe they are few*;] *Dentes molares.* Teeth ceaſe. *And thoſe that look out of the Windowes be darkened*;] The Eyes darkened and dimm'd with Blindneſs. *And the Doors ſhall be ſhut in the ſtreets*;] Their Maladies ſo noyſome, that none can come to viſit them. *And he ſhall riſe up at the voyce of the Bird*;] That is, take little reſt; the chirping of a Bird, or any little thing ſhall awake and diſturb him. *And all the daughters of Muſick ſhall be brought low*;] This may be interpreted by comparing it with 2 *Sam.* 19. 35. *Man goeth to his long home*;] *Comp. Job* 30. 23. and *Iſa.* 26. 4. *Or ever the ſilver Cord be looſed*;] Some interpret it of the Marrow, others of the Sinews. *Or the golden Bowl be broken, or the Pitcher be broken at the Fountain*;] The Liver is the Fountain of Blood, the Heart of Spirits, theſe loſe their drawing and diſtributing Power.

Theſe things conſidered, *viz.* the Inconveniencies of Old Age, and the Fitneſs of Youth for the Service of his Creator, ſhould (methinks) prevail with young men to live henceforth not unto themſelves, but unto their Creator and Redeemer. *The time of Youth is Seed-time.* The Proverb is, *Youth layes in, and Age lives upon it: The one ſowes, the other reaps.* Now is your Market-time, in which, if ye be wiſe, ye may make a happy Exchange of Earth for Heaven, of a Valley of Tears for a Paradiſe of Delights. Young Men, conſider, you are now Flowers in the bloom; your Friends Delight, your Countreys Hope; It lyeth very much in your Sphere, to be either a Crown of Rejoyceing to them, or to bring down their Gray hairs with ſorrow to the Grave. But I dare not enlarge.

Juveni parandum, ſeni utendum, Sen.

Primitiæ terræ, & primitiæ ætatis Deoſacræ.

Rea. 4. Fourthly, *Remember your Creator*

ator in the dayes of your Youth, becauſe if thou thinkeſt of deferring till *Old Age*, it is a queſtion whether thou mayſt *live ſo long*; beſides the Inconveniences of Old Age, which I have told you, (as above written,) The Beſt of us cannot promiſe our ſelves a day. The *preſent* Time is onely ours; the Morrow we are not ſure of. Take Time therefore by the Forelock, and cry not *Cras*, *Cras*, to Morrow, to Morrow; Manna muſt be gathered in the Morning; the Orient Pearl is generated by the Morning Dew. Egregious folly it is to procraſtinate and put off to the laſt:

At tu dum primi floret tibi temporis ætas,
Utere. Tib.

Improve your Time while you are Young.

Fifthly, *Remember your Creator in the dayes of your Youth*, becauſe the *Day of Grace may have its Sunſet on a ſudden*: Thou mayſt live *Rea.* 5.

perhaps to an Old Age, but the Day of Grace may not laſt ſo long. Now the Goſpel is preached, Chriſt crucified ſet forth, the aſſiſtance of the Spirit offered, and the Gates of Heaven opened to entertain you; O therefore Now, *To day if ye will hear his voyce*, Heb. 3. 7. If to day thou ſayſt thou *wilt not* pray, to morrow thou mayſt ſay thou *canſt not* pray. Now therefore, *now*, as you would tender the good of your own Souls, work apace; you have the Sun-ſhine of the Goſpel, but a Cloud will come: While the Sun therefore doth ſhine, cock your Hay, ſhock your Corn; wanton not away your Summer, leſt you begge in Winter: The Night indeed is for *ſleeping*, but the Day (eſpecially a Sun-ſhine Day, a clear Day,) is for

It is obſerved, that the Seaſon of Grace is call'd but *a Day*, not a Month, Week or Year.

The Seaſon of Grace (ſaith one) is a Summers day for Clearneſs, but a Winters day for Shortneſs.

Cæſar's deferring to read his Letter before he went to the Senate-houſe, coſt him his Life.

for *working*. One being in a fit of Anger, a perſon ſaid unto him, *Domine, Sol ad Occaſum*; The Sun is going down. If the Sun muſt not go down upon our Wrath, let it not go down upon our Loytering.

Sixthly, If you have your Life prolonged, and the Means of Grace continued, yet if no more *gales of the Spirit* be afforded, what art thou the nearer? When Gods Spirit blows upon us, we ſhall go full Sail to Heaven. It is good ſtriking therefore while the Iron is hot, and lanching out while Wind and Tide ſerve; open all thy Sails to every breath and gale of Gods Spirit: Welcome every Suggeſtion, reverence every Dictate, cheriſh every Illapſe of this bleſſed Monitor. Let every Inſpiration find thee as the Seal doth the Wax, or the Spark the Tinder. *Rem. 6.* *The Word is as the Wax, the Spirit is as the Seal, ſo that the Spirit is the principal Verbal in the ſentence.*

Seventhly and laſtly, *Remember* *Rem. 7.*

your Creator in the dayes of your Youth, becauſe the *Promiſe* is made unto *Early Seekers*; Prov. 8. 17. *They that ſeek me Early, ſhall find me.*

Application.

Is there good Reaſon why we ſhould *Remember our Creator in the dayes of our Youth?* Then let my Meſſage to you (O Young Men) this day be accepted. The Reaſonableneſs of my Meſſage I have ſhewed in ſeveral Reſpects. Did I preſs you to things that might tend to your hurt, it were ſomething; but I am onely intreating you this day to be kind unto your Souls, and make your peace with God: *While the dayes come not, nor the years draw nigh, when ye ſhall ſay, I have no pleaſure in them.*

The Reſult of all therefore is; Young men, *Remember your Creator*, by whom it is that you *live*, *move*,

move, and have your *Being*. Forget him not, leſt he forget you, but ſeek him Early, and ye ſhall find him. Motives hereunto I think very convenient. As,

Firſt, If *Honour* will ſway you, know that it is the Honourableſt thing in the world to Remember your *Creator in the dayes of your Youth*. Is it commendable for a Child to obey his Earthly Father, how much more commendable is it then for us to Obey our Heavenly Father? Shun (O Young Men) the Worlds Ambition, and make this your Ambition (with good *Joſiah*) to ſet out *betimes*; with ſpiritual *Iſaac*, to give your ſelves to Meditation while ye are young; with heavenly *Jacob*, to prize and ſeek the Bleſſing, while others in the uſe of their vain Sports loſe it; with King *Solomon*, to *know* the God of your Fathers; with righteous *Obadiah*, to fear the Lord from your Youth; and with *Motive* 1.

with Ingenious *Timothy*, to know the *Scriptures* from a Child. And what a Cloud of young Worthies are here? and are they not Honoured, Renowned and made Famous, and that for their *ſoon beginning?* The like will be with you, Young men. *Remember* your *Creator* in the *dayes of your Youth*, and he will Honour you. But alas, how few are the number of theſe young Branches!

How few are there of the Sons of Wiſdom, that being enticed by Men, conſent not! But how Honourable is it (I ſay) for young Men, like *Samuel*, to miniſter and ſerve before the Lord while he was but a Child! and how comely was the Carriage of thoſe Children that ſang *Hoſanna's* unto Chriſt! Contemplate often (Young men) theſe Looking-glaſſes; imitate and copy out theſe patterns and Preſidents; Beſides, King *Edward* the Sixth, that *Phœnix* of his

his time; that truely Noble Prince *Henry*, and the young Lord *Harrington*; with many others, who bloſſomed as the Almond-tree, betimes.

Secondly, The *longer* you neg- *Motive* 2.
lect, the *more difficult* will the *ſetting upon* your Duty be. Much Sloath and Procraſtination will at laſt take away the very Heart and Deſire of ſeeking God; but now, Youth improved, will make the Performance of the Duty more facile. Opportunity improv'd, (ſayes one) facilitates every Action and Employment, making a work come off ſweetly, ſmoothly and with facility. It is as the laying of the Knife upon the Joynt, when we would divide the Bone. It is Wind and Tide to the Oars of Induſtry.

Thirdly, The more *Wrath* you *Motive* 3.
will treaſure up unto your ſelves, by having more ſins to *anſwer for*. The ſooner we begin, the leſs we

ſhall

ſhall have to anſwer for; but the longer we deferre, the more we ſhall have to anſwer for.

Motive 4. Fourthly, Young Men ſhall come to *Judgement* as well as thoſe of riper years: You think that you have a Priviledge by your Age; Youth muſt have its courſe, (ſay ſome;) they muſt ſow their wild Oats. But now the Counſel of the Spirit is otherwiſe. *In the Morning ſow thy Seed, and in the Evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knoweſt not whether ſhall proſper.* And *David* doth tie up your untamed Age to the *horns of the Altar*, ſaying, That even *You muſt cleanſe your wayes, by taking heed thereto according to Gods Word.* Think not (I ſay) becauſe you are Young, you ſhall be excuſed: For *the dead, ſmall and great* ſhall ſtand before the Lord, and you that now take your pleaſures, know, that for all that, ye ſhall come to Judgement, and

and your Pleaſures ſhall have an End. Methinks that Scripture in the 11 of *Eccleſ. v.* 9. ſhould cool the Courage of ſuch Young men who go on in their Career to Hell in the midſt of their Pleaſures. *Rejoyce, O young Man, in thy youth, and let thy Heart cheer thee in the dayes of thy youth, and walk in the wayes of thy heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all theſe things God will bring thee into Judgement.*

Fifthly, You will not Repent that you have *call'd God to mind ſo ſoon.* But thou ſhalt eſteem Gods Grace the more for it; rejoyce in the ſenſe of it, and in Comfort conclude thy Life whenſoever God ſhall call thee hence.

I would fain lay down ſome Cautions and Exhortations unto the Young Men of this Age, which if obſerved by them, I am confident would help them much in *remembring* of their great Creator.

tor. But ſhould I doe this, it would make this little Book ſwell too much, which for the Poor's ſake I would prevent; and yet a little too I will venture.

Firſt more *generally*, have a care Young Men of laying a ſtreſs on Parentage, Birth, Education, Civility, and your Natural Endowments: They are all but painted ſhews of Righteouſneſs, and crack'd Titles to Heaven. Faith comes not by Birth, Generation, or Education; and he who is Gifted, is not alwayes Believing.

But (*Secondly*) more *particularly*, I would caution you from theſe Vices, which tend much to the Corruption of Youth:

Firſt, I would caution you from *Love of the World. If any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him*, 1 Joh. 2. 15. O let not the World lye ſo neer your Hearts, as it did to the Young Man's in the Goſpel. You can

can never Love your Creator ſo as to *die* for him, if the World get root in your Heart. Have a care (I beſeech you) of preferring the Gifts of God before God himſelf. All Creatures that the Lord made, he made for Man, and Man for himſelf: But this is a fearfull Contempt of God and diſeſtimation of his Majeſty, when the Creature is better lov'd than God; as *Evah* for the love of an Apple loſt the love of the Lord; and *Eſau* for a Meſs of Pottage ſold his Birthright; and the *Gadarens* counted their *S*wine more precious than the *S*on of God, *Chriſt Jeſus*. He that loveth theſe bodily, worldly, and periſhing Riches, cannot love the ſpiritual, heavenly and eternal Riches. Love not this World, becauſe the Devil is the God of it; love not

Noli (anima) diligere ea quæ ſunt in mundo, peribit Mundus, & omnia quæ ſunt in eo exurentur. Ger. Meditat.

this

this World, becauſe it cools thy Affections to God and the things of God. Love not this World, becauſe it is the Bird-lime of ſpiritual Puniſhments; Love not this World, becauſe the Love of the World is Enmity towards God. The Riches in this World are call'd *Thick Clay*, *Hab.* 2. 6. which will ſooner break the Back, than lighten the Heart. O that I could but diſſwade Young men from this *peccatum peccatorum*, ſin of Earthly-mindedneſs. Conſider, O young Men, what *Solomon* ſayes of this World, who knew as much as ever any did as to the ſweetneſs of *ſenſual pleaſures*. Three Advantages *Solomon* had above others to know the Vanity of the Creature. (1) In regard of his *Wiſdome*, 1 *Kings* 4. 29, 30. (2) *Riches*, 1 *King.* 10. 23. (3) In that he gave himſelf to *make trial* and *Experience* of the Creature: Yet, *Vanity of Vanities* (ſaith the Preacher)

Amor rerum terrenarum viſcus eſt ſpiritualium pœnarum. Aug.

Preacher) *Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity.*

Five times *Vanity.* 1. *Vanity,* not *vain* onely, but *Vanity* it ſelf in the Abſtract. 2. *Exceſſive Vanity*; *Vanity of Vanities,* Hebraiſm, ſuperlative, by doubling he ſignifies *moſt vain, imperfect, uncertain, tranſitory, void of Content, full of Grief.* 3. An *heap of Vanities*; *Vanity of Vanities*; an Hebraiſm, and imports *moſt great Vanity.* 4. An *univerſal Propoſition*; *all is Vanity. Fugiamus hinc ubi nihil eſt, ubi inane eſt omne quod magnificum putatur.* Let us flye from this World, wherein is nothing but Vanity. *Nihil ſiquidem a ſomni Vanitate differt rerum præſentium figura, ſive illæ triſtes ſint, ſive proſperæ:* The moſt excellent Shews of this Life are but Dreams, which may affect for a time, but do vaniſh ſo ſoon as the man awaketh. And this is the firſt Caution, *Love not the*

World. The Love of the World is an Obſtacle that muſt be removed, where Love to Chriſt and to thy Soul (Young man) is to be ſhewn.

Secondly, I would caution you from *Evil Company.* I know very well, that we are mighty apt to follow a Multitude to do Evil; I know that Youth, above all, is apt to keep Company, eſpecially *bad* Company. And how many have been brought to Ruine thereby? Have not many at the Gallowes laid their ſins at the Door of *bad Company*, forewarning all to ſhun the ſame, and take Example by them. Every man is as his Company: The Heathen could ſay, *Noſcitur ex comite qui non cognoſcitur ex ſe*; He is known by his Company, that cannot be known by himſelf. A Mans Company is as it were a Commentary on his Life. A Company or Multitude (and I pray Young Men do

Witneſs *Thomas Savage* that penitent Sinner.

do you eſpecially take notice of it) is not the Rule you ſhould walk by, as for *doing Evil*, ſo for *doing Good*. He that doth Good becauſe a Multitude doth it, will alſo do Evil becauſe a Multitude doth it. *We muſt not* (ſaith *Auſtin*) *do a good thing becauſe Many do it, but becauſe it is Good: If others doe that which is Good* (ſaith he) *I will rejoyce becauſe they doe it, but I will not do it becauſe they do it*, &c. Keep good Company we muſt, it is profitable, but we muſt not make their doing Good as the Grounds of our doing Good. Shun Evil Company; Is it not an hard thing for a Bird to flie away that is taken in the Lime-twigs? Why Evil Company are the Devils Lime-twigs; And what is the Reaſon that many a man doth

Non faciendum, quia Multi faciunt, ſed quia Bonum ut Bonum faciunt, aut bene ſatis mihi ſunt pauci, ſatis unus, ſatis nullus: Auguſt.

Si potentiores faciunt, non faciam quia faciunt, ſed gaudeo quia faciunt.

continue in Sin, who is convinced of the Evil of it, but becauſe he is held faſt in the Bands of his wicked Company?

Thirdly, I would caution you from *Pride*. This is a Vice which is incident to all more or leſs, but eſpecially to young men. Converted young men, beware of Pride, for it is that which will rankor all your Graces; know that you are vile in Progreſs, Egreſs and Ingreſs. Unconverted young Men, do you alſo beware of Pride, for it tends to your hurt, as well as it doth to the other; for that ſelf-conceitedneſs of yours is that which helps to barre your Hearts againſt Chriſt. Young Men, be cloathed with Humility; let every one of us look with one eye upon Grace, to keep the Heart cheerfull; and with the other eye upon Sin, to keep it humble.

Fourthly, I would have young men

men to beware of *Luſt*, it being their Complexion, Conſtitution, and beloved Sin; the ſin that attends their Age, and therefore ſo much the more diligence and pains muſt be taken in the Mortification thereof; and I know not any thing that is ſo proper hereunto as being moderate in Diet, keeping the Body down by frequent Faſtings in private between God and thy own Soul upon that Occaſion. *Flee Youthfull Luſts*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 22.

Fifthly and laſtly, Beware of *Hypocriſie*. Perhaps the Devil may flatter you, with telling you, That if ye can get the Shape, Figure, and Form of Godlineſs, it is no matter for any thing elſe, thou mayſt (ſaith he) go for a Chriſtian eminent enough among men. Ah, but tell the Tempter, It is onely *Piety* that hath the Promiſe of the Life to come, and though thou mayſt goe for a Chriſtian amongſt

amongſt Men, and ſeem well enough in their ſight; yet know, in Gods ſight thou ſhalt be diſcern'd; God will one day pull off thy paint, diſcover thee, and ſhew thee to the world in thy proper Colours. The very Inteiour Intents of thy Soul he knows, thy heart he can read without a Commentary, and thoſe things that are ſecret, which thou keepeſt under Lock and Key, he knows; and though thou mayeſt deceive Man, yet thou canſt not deceive God. *Deus nec fallere, nec falli poteſt.*

I ſhould now give ſome Exhortations, but I cannot, becauſe of being prevented as to that which I ſpoke before. *Remember your Creator in the dayes of your youth*: And as Helps hereunto take theſe, and enlarge upon them your ſelves.

1. View often the *Creation* of the World; what Man in the World

World can forget God, that has himself and the whole Creation to contemplate at any time?

2. Call to mind his *signal Favours* vouchsafed unto you, in such a Time, at such a Place, among such Company. Can the Begger soon forget that hand which he constantly receives his Alms from?

3. Study the *Holy Scriptures*. Who can soon forget a holy God, that may read of him every day in the Holy Scriptures?

4. Attend upon the *Ministry of the Word*. You in *London* may hear from God every day, and surely cannot soon forget him.

5. Keep *good Company*, and then you cannot easily forget God, because you converse with his Friends; and 'twill be marvel if they do not talk of him sometimes unto you.

I shall conclude with the words of the Text.

Re-

Rememember now your Creator in the dayes of your youth; that you may be as ſo many Veſſels of Gold for the Prayſe and Service of your Maker. *Amen.*

Oecolampadius *de Scriptis ſuis.*

Ἐιτι γέγραπται καλῶς χριστὸν
δοξάζε δοτῆρα
Ἐιτι γέγραπται κακῶς ἴθι με
εἶναι βροτόν.

Si bene quid ſcripſi, Chriſto gratate datori:
Si male quid ſcripſi, noveris eſſe meum.

FINIS.

Rememember now your Creator in the dayes of your youth; that you may be as so many Vessels of Gold for the Prayse and Service of your Maker. *Amen.*

Oecolampadius *de Scriptis suis.*

Ἐιτι γέγραπται καλῶς χρεὸν
δοξαζε δοτῆρα
Ἐιτι γέγραπται κακῶς ἴθι με
εἶναι βροτόν.

Si bene quid scripsi, Christo gratate datori:
Si male quid scripsi, noveris esse meum.

FINIS.